774 is the object of constant concern during agrarian rituals. The role of the soul of plants is particularly noticeable in their medicinal uses. Drawing a remedy from a plant may cause its death, liberating its spiritual principles for the benefit of the sick man. Because of this, such an act is equated with a blood sacrifice.

With the exception of the ngovo tomato, plants have no dya. The shadow (suma) of a plant is not independent like that of a man or an animal. It exists only through light effects and its movements are caused by the air and the wind moving its leaves and branches. This is what the Bambara means when he says that the dya has a life of its own and depends on Faro, whereas the plant's suma depends on the spirit Tériko, master of the air.

774 An individual's dya can be known and his temperament and life
787 possibilities assessed by measuring his shadow on the earth at noon.
804 The unit employed is the little finger, which is a corporeal symbol
843 of the person. If a pregnant woman is thus measured, the sex of the child may be predicted.

774 When a boy or a girl gets married, it is said of them: a ye a dya
[576] furu: "he (or she) has married his dya." For it is impolite to say that a person married anyone but his spiritual double. Besides, the union of the couple is repeated by the union of their dya which like themselves are of opposite sex. In olden times, male twins married the
[595 851] same woman and the latter's dya was taken over by Faro in the Niger. The child she conceived was the son of both husbands.

● 589 Some men do not marry. This is true of the Soma, the religious
791 diviner attached to the major Bambara societies. Initiated in the course of a solitary sojourn in the bush, he left his dya with the invisible spirits. This is a prerequisite to the gift of double sight with which he is endowed as well as a protection against possible dangers to the dya when it remains in contact with the earth, or when it approaches other humans. The true spouse of the Soma is his dya: he may mate only with it on a fixed date when the spirits return it to him for this purpose. /61/

The tere

774 The tere was inflicted by Pemba on Mousso Koroni in order to diminish her power at the time he was pursuing her. This explains its complexity: it is at once the character of a man, his strength,

791 The gifts he has received and the position of his dya compel /221/
589 the Soma to remain unmarried and to observe a certain chastity. "The wife of the Soma lives with the spirits," says the informant who adds that every forty-nine days (7 x 7) his dya is returned to him during the night for the purpose of a sexual union.

From the moment the Soma begins to exercise his art regularly, he visits the bush from time to time to consult the spirits and make offerings to them. Moreover, the latter visit him in his home where he attracts them by burning a powder that gives off a smell of which they are fond.

Like the griot, the Soma has a mouth full of nyama: his own to which is added that of the spirits who help him and control him. His word is so powerful that he rarely announces a death, for this would contribute to the propagation of death.

The Soma must be rigorously clean, wear simple clothes, and even dress as an indigent. During ceremonies he hangs the stone jineworo around his neck with a string and must always carry this stone in a pocket of his tunic. He generally belongs to the Komo society and may become its chief. In this case he is the recognized diviner of the village.

791 The Soma keeps in his home his stone of alliance and his harp
766 with its accessories. When he dies, his body is left for some time alone in the house; the spirits are supposed to come and reclaim these objects which no one must touch and which no one will inherit. The burial of the body and the funeral ceremonies are performed only after this delay. His soul is never kept in the Komo altars and goes to join the dya in the domains of Téliko; the spiritual principles of the Soma are not reincarnated and the gift which he has received is not hereditary.

791 The Soma's harp (Fig. 17) (1) is made of a rectangular chest (bara)
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1. See G. Dieterlen, Morphologie et symbolique de deux instruments de musique bambara /The Morphology and Symbolism of Two Instruments of Bambara Music/.

pierced through longitudinally by a long piece of wood (ngoni kala, literally, stalk of the ngoni) surrounded by little leather thongs in the shape of rings (jiri wolo, literally, skin of wood). These hold

476 461 567 The patriarchal community draws its subsistence from this agricultural exploitation, and as a result, a kind of work organization has developed. Patriarchal communities or important families have agricultural land in various regions and these tracts are often far apart. Some members of the community or a group of slaves are therefore settled in each domain, sometimes on a permanent basis, sometimes for the period of clearing and cultivating the soil, sometimes for the period of harvest. [361]

Theoretically, every member of the community and every slave must work for the community from dawn to around noon every day during the farming season. Two days, however, Monday and Thursday, are given to these persons for work in their own fields. Anyone who cannot or will not work has the right to provide a replacement from among his dependents.

There are, of course, many exceptions to these rules. In the first place, everyone works according to his position. Among the poor, the master works as hard as the slave, if not harder; among people in comfortable circumstances, the master merely controls and directs the work, sometimes reserving a particular job for himself. In important communities, field work [189] is almost exclusively the duty of the slaves, under the surveillance of their leaders and following the orders of the fa, who either supervises it himself or has a member of his entourage do so.

583 589 768 Conjugal usufruct. When she marries, a woman is given in usufruct in exchange for the bride price. This usufruct is community property exactly like the things used for the bride price.

When a fa dies, the disposal of the conjugal usufruct included in the estate is a serious matter. Since the conjugal usufruct is of the same duration as the life of the woman, the death of the husband has no legal effect on the situation of his spouse. Since it is understood, however, that the widow has no sexual obligations to her husband's heirs, the usufruct is reduced in that respect. Such is the lot of widows when the heirs decide to keep them without marrying them and the women elect to remain.

583 Most often, however, the heirs either marry the widows
589 or send them home, or the women leave of their own volition.
768 An heir who marries a widow of the deceased must take
[587] her back to her family, obtain their consent, and pay them a new bride price, required because a new usufruct is involved. The chronicle of Ségou shows us how this custom operates. Upon the death of Dina Wara, his son escorted to Ségou his father's widow, Biton's sister, whom he wanted to marry. He made sumptuous gifts in order to obtain consent.

In the case of a widow who is sent home or who leaves of her own accord, responsibility for the bride price already paid rests with the party who broke the contract, i.e., with the person who sent the widow away or, if she left of her own accord, with her family. The question of responsibility for the bride price is an important one, since usually neither party has either the means or the desire to make it up. As a result, every effort is made to evade payment, and it is common practice to resort to the most shameless bargaining of the woman involved. A husband is sought who will agree to pay the bride price asked by the one having rights over her, but most often, partial payment will be made when the woman is returned, the creditor's impatience is calmed by gifts, and the balance of the bride price remains wholly or partly unpaid [190] at the time of the debtor's death. This obviously results in insolvable complications during and after the marriage (1).

1. Concerning the lot of widows, see the discussions about the widows of Biton and Ngolo in the chronicle of Ségou.

567 Slaves. Enslavement comes about in many ways, but the
727 three principal ones are force, birth, and the result of obligations.

Force has perhaps been the primary cause of enslavement. A person who surrenders is the chattel of the conqueror, but the treatment given him varies in accordance with his previous situation. Was he a man of position? If he is violent, he is killed or sold; if it is thought that his relatives will pay a high ransom, he is kept. If he is clever enough to arouse sympathy, he often is